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Paul Adds District Student to Washington Staff *Calhoun Valedictorian Learns the Ropes in D.C.*

Washington, D.C. - Congressman Ron Paul recently welcomed Mark Lai of Port Lavaca to his Washington staff. Lai, Class of 2000 valedictorian at Calhoun High School, is interning in Paul's office this summer before moving to Houston to attend Rice University in the fall. Paul said he is excited about having Lai aboard for the next three months. "The summer is always an enjoyable time around the office because we get the opportunity to bring in young people from the district," said Paul. "Mark is an excellent addition to the staff. The work ethic and dedication he showed by graduating first in his class is the same I look for when staffing my office." Lai, who plans to major in computer science at Rice, has always been interested in government. He thought an internship in Paul's office would be the best way to get a "hands-on" feel for how the process works. Said Lai, "Right now, I'm primarily assisting the other staff members with constituent mail, phone calls, and other customer service type of activities. It's a great experience. People here are literally from around the world and learning from others is very educational." Lai said that traveling to Washington has given him a new perspective on the leaders who shape government policy. It's also given him a new respect for home. "One thing I have realized is that Congressmen and Senators are still people, not gods," said Lai. "They have to eat and sleep like the rest of us. And the other thing I learned right away is that absolutely nothing tastes like mother's cooking." Lai is the son of Richard and April Lai of Port Lavaca. He will continue in Paul's Washington office until August 4th.